

# The most dangerous man in america and the pentagon papers

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Freedom of expression Freedom of expression The film, the Most Dangerous Man in America, manifests the importance of maintaining individual liberties in a country. USA is home to the First Amendment and the Declaration of Rights. These monuments of human welfare validated the US as a country that prioritizes the interests of the public against those of the government. In spite of this assumption, the Pentagon papers revealed that four successive governments had cheated the public over the cause of the Vietnam War. Daniel Ellsberg showed determination and steadfast conscience in releasing the set of classified documents that showed how successive reigns remained unanswerable to the Press, the Congress, and the American people on a war that cost lives and the economy.

The Pentagon Papers revealed that a constitution should maintain liberties that ensure a government is answerable to the public. For instance, the Espionage Act of 1917 had been a great defense utilized by the government to prosecute Ellsberg (Overbeck & Belmas, 2014). This act occurred alongside the constitution's provision for freedom of expression and freedom of press. In this view, the constitution could not adequately guard the freedom of expression that the release of documents depended upon the same. The constitution, therefore, is the sole way in which the citizens and institutions such as the press can hold governments accountable for their actions. The existence of loopholes such as the Espionage Act compromises on individuals' abilities to perform activism against irresponsible governments. This further revealed that the constitution should provide the platform for political activism, which helps restore certain privileges that the evolution of the constitution, in itself, has helped establish.

The Pentagon Papers coincide with the foundation of the First Amendment that defends liberties pertaining to expression, religion, assembly, and the entitlement to petition. In the Pentagon Papers' case, Ellsberg helped promote the provision that prohibits the Congress from constraining the press or suffocating the entitlements of individuals to speak freely. In a scenario of oppression, the makers the First Amendment realized that the press is the sole savior of the citizens and their rights. There, thus, was a need to protect the press as a platform for diverse opinions. In addition, the press could be a proper means of petitioning the government in upholding its responsibility towards the people and relevant institutions.

The Declaration of Rights holds that individuals have the right to pursuit of happiness, liberty, and life. These ends cannot occur if a there is limited correspondence between the public and the government. The government is the principal custodian of the constitution. In this sense, the citizens uphold the government as a responsible body that protects their privileges as ascribed by the constitution. The Pentagon Papers, however, reveal that even the government is capable of irresponsibility. In such cases, the Press needs to rely on its freedom of expression towards protecting the rights and privileges of the citizens. In as much as the Nixon administration strove to stifle the press through the constitution, the judgment upheld that the freedom of the press is an ultimate way of ensuring democracy in a country. In spite of the ethical concerns of secrecy, the government could not protect the secrecy that trampled over the rights of the individuals.

Reference

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Overbeck, W., & Belmas, G. I. (2014). Major principles of media law. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.